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INSIDE THIS "INSIDE"

Page

Texas A&M University has openings for five agricultural communicators.....1
Update of listing of ag communicators on electronic mail network distributed..1
USDA public affairs specialists help with Caribbean ag marketing workshop.....2
Foreign Agricultural Service aims to improve outreach service to exporters....2
Got a meat or poultry problem? Then call FSIS' toll-free hotline.....2
U.S. Army wants to get USDA "consumer" information to its personnel/families..3
First conference and expo on automation in agriculture, Agri-Mation I, set....3
Multiscreen slide-tape presentation still reasonable audiovisual alternative..3
NASA periodical will begin running advertisements to offset production costs..4
Despite electronic marvels, today's executives are still "pencil pushers".....4

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY HAS JOB OPENINGS

Texas A&M University has announced openings for five ag communications positions--two in the broadcasting area, one audiovisuals specialist, one graphic artist and one research publications editor.

Don Springer, head of Texas A&M's Agricultural Communications Department, says applications will be accepted immediately for all five positions and until the positions have been filled. But they're anxious to get the jobs filled.

The two broadcasting positions, the audiovisuals and research editor positions require master's degrees in journalism or related fields. The graphic arts position requires a bachelor's degree in educational media, commercial art, print production or related field. Most of the positions require at least two years of experience; the editorial position requires five years experience.

The positions are responsible to the ag communications department head. One of the broadcast positions, the audiovisual and editorial positions provide leadership to other staff members.

For more details about the positions and for submitting applications, resumes, transcripts, etc., contact Don M. Springer, Professor and Head, Department of Agricultural Communications, 229 Reed McDonald Building, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX 77843-2112. Or call (409) 845-2211, or send message via Dialcom electronic mailbox AGS2260.

AG COMMUNICATORS' EM LIST UPDATED

The listing of agricultural communicators using the electronic mail system provided through time-sharing computer services of ITT Dialcom Incorporated has been updated and mailed (postal mail) to USDA agency information offices, and to land grant university and state department of agriculture information offices.

The updated listing is more than double the length of the last update of about a year ago. In addition to the traditional ag communicators, the list now also contains all of the USDA-state crop and livestock reporting officers.

Anyone not getting a copy of the listing, or anyone desiring to have the listing transmitted electronically, should send a note to Nancy Bevis on AGR001, or call at (202) 447-7454.

USDA TAKES A CARIBBEAN INITIATIVE

Laura Whitaker, public affairs specialist with USDA's Office of International Cooperation & Development, and Phil Villa-Lobos, public affairs specialist with USDA's Office of Information (News Division), are coordinating press coverage at USDA's second Agricultural Marketing Workshop for the Caribbean Basin this week (Sept. 23-27) in Miami, Fla.

Secretary John R. Block's U.S. private sector agribusiness promotion council recommended that USDA organize the workshop, which is part of the President's Caribbean Basin Initiative.

About 1,200 persons, mostly from Central American nations, are expected to attend.

FAS 'AIMS' TO HELP EXPORTERS

USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service recently initiated an 18-month pilot project to improve the outreach and timeliness of its marketing information services to U.S. exporters and to buyers overseas.

Known as AIMS (Agricultural Information and Marketing Services), the project started out as a promotional campaign "to spread the word" about FAS services.

However, it was soon apparent that exporters also needed guidance in how to make the most effective use of the informational tools at their disposal. As a consequence, the AIMS "awareness" campaign was quickly broadened to a more complete educational campaign.

Information on AIMS is being disseminated via radio and television as well as by direct mail. In a few weeks, AIMS brochures will be mailed to more than 30,000 prospective users of the improved and new FAS services.

All state departments of agriculture have been enlisted in the effort to make sure that all current and prospective exporters are aware of FAS services which could assist their marketing efforts.

The AIMS project also involves the use of extensive FAS telecommunications capabilities to add to the package of information services available to help U.S. firms in their bids to export agricultural products.

GOT MEAT OR POULTRY PROBLEM? CALL FREE

Consumers in three states who have questions about the safe buying, storing or preparing of meat and poultry products will be able to telephone toll-free to experts in USDA's Food Safety & Inspection Service now through October.

This pilot project covers Kentucky, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

The telephone number is 1-800-535-4555.

FSIS has had a meat and poultry hotline (not toll-free) since 1982. It handled about 2,000 inquiries last year.

The new service will be in operation from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (EDT) Monday through Friday.

Donald L. Houston, FSIS administrator, sees the hotline as a two-way street. Not only can consumers get answers about the proper handling of food, and report problems they experience with meat and poultry products, but FSIS will gain valuable information about current consumer interests and problems.

The pilot project, which ends Oct. 31, will help FSIS determine if there is sufficient interest for such a toll free service.

ARMY WANTS USDA CONSUMER INFORMATION

The U.S. Army's public affairs office has asked USDA to explore possibility of providing information on consumer-related topics for use in periodicals at the many military installations.

Lillie Vincent, public affairs specialist with the Office of Information's Special Programs Division, is exploring the possibility with the Army's public affairs office of providing a series of USDA-prepared columns for the some 400 periodicals issued at Army installations in the U.S. and overseas.

The periodicals range from weekly newspapers to biweekly tabloid newspapers to monthly mimeographs.

The columns would deal primarily with consumer-related topics, but not exclusively. The columns would be included in the quarterly press and feature mailings from the Army public affairs office.

Vincent has been contacting USDA agency information offices about their contributions to the potential columns.

CONFERENCE, EXPO TO FOCUS ON AUTOMATION

Automation in agriculture will be the focus of Agri-Mation I, a conference and exposition slated for Chicago next Feb. 26-28. Sponsors are the Society of Manufacturing Engineers and the American Society of Agricultural Engineers.

The exposition is expected to feature new developments in several fields, including irrigation and drainage, harvesting, biomass conversion, aquacultural systems, forestry and maintenance.

The conference is expected to feature presentations by leading automation and agricultural experts, offering overviews, research reports and case studies.

Details on the conference are available from: Patricia Van Doren, Society of Manufacturing Engineers, One SME Drive, P.O. Box 930, Dearborn, MI 48121, or call (313) 271-1500.

MULTIMEDIA SHOW IMPRESSES PHOTOGRAPHERS

The lights dim, the stereophonic sound comes up, and the large screen is filled with scenes of an airliner leaving Washington's National Airport, passing the Washington Monument, and heading up the Potomac River flight path.

Suddenly, the screen is filled with a myriad of Washington scenes, dissolving into one another, floating across the field of vision, all in step with the music. Eventually, all merge into a single panoramic view of the city.

This is a segment of an audiovisual presentation produced by John Burr of JRB Productions, Bethesda, Md. It has the visual impact of a wide-screen stereophonic movie, but it's all done with still photos, shown on 15 slide projectors all taking command from a computer-programmed synchronizing tape.

That is why several members of the Photography Division in USDA's Office of Information made a special visit to view the JRB production recently. It's all part of an ongoing effort to incorporate new technology into USDA slide presentations.

A slide presentation, even a sophisticated one like this, takes only a fraction of the budget a motion picture would take, says Dave Warren of the USDA Photography Division. If you're interested in what the Photography Division is doing with slide presentations (and folks there are figuring out how to put some of these 15-projector effects into one and two-projector shows), call Warren or Theodosia Thomas on (202) 447-6633.

NASA PERIODICAL WILL RUN ADVERTISEMENTS

For those who missed it, the NEW YORK TIMES reported Sept. 20 that at least one Federal government periodical will start running advertisements in the near future.

The magazine, NASA TECH BRIEFS, is a quarterly.

Associated Business Publications of New York is taking over all but the editorial chores of the publication, including circulation, which it hopes to double. The article says this will "relieve" the government of an estimated \$2 million annual expense.

The TIMES reports that a full black-and-white page will sell for \$3,990, and a 4-color page will cost an additional \$850.

The newspaper quoted Leonard A. Ault, NASA's chief of dissemination and analysis, as stating the move in this direction began several years ago when the U.S. Office of Management & Budget put pressure on federal agencies to find ways to recoup losses from publishing ventures.

"Most agencies," Ault was quoted, "have tried to do so by charging for publications that had been free." The article continues:

"NASA, however, researched TECH BRIEFS' readership and discovered a common attitude, which went like this: 'We paid for the research as taxpayers in the first place, and we don't want to pay again to learn about it.'

"A check by his associates, he added, showed that among technical publications outside the government, the trend is away from paid circulation and toward controlled or free. Other checking, he said, showed that the cost of maintaining a paid circulation frequently ran to more than a publication earned from it."

MODERN EXECS STILL 'PENCIL PUSHERS'

Most U.S. executives--despite word processing, electronic mail and other modern office equipment--are still "pencil pushers" when they write business letters, memos and reports, according to a new nationwide survey of 218 executives conducted by Communispond, Inc., management consultants to business communication.

Although it's tedious work, 89 percent of the respondents ranked the "pad and pencil" method far ahead of dictation (10 percent) and computers (1 percent).

The survey also found that nearly 80 percent of the executives reported writing "more or just as many" pieces of correspondence in 1984 as they did in 1983. One pencil pusher claimed he wrote "over 50" per week.

The survey, covering small, medium and large companies, included a cross section of mid and upper management in the accounting, marketing, finance, sales, research and legal areas.

INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Any items, comments and inquiries should be addressed to either John Crowley or Nancy Bevis, Office of Information, Room 536A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or to AGR002 mailbox on the Dialcom system, or call (202) 447-7454.

